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THURSDAY HIGHLIGHTS

◆ Security Council holds consultations to discuss situation in Haiti; will convene formal meeting tonight with participation of Haitian President.

◆ General Assembly is addressed by President of interim Government of Liberia and Foreign Ministers of Cameroon, Bulgaria, Morocco and Côte d'Ivoire. Permanent Representative of Guinea and Foreign Ministers of Mongolia, Burundi, Mauritania and Jamaica, as well as Permanent Representative of Malawi also make statements.

◆ Chairman of Social, Humanitarian and Cultural Committee says action is needed to combat disease and ignorance in developing countries, as well as drug abuse, crime and imbalanced distribution of wealth in developed world.

◆ Economic and Financial Committee told that transition to market economy should head United Nations agenda.

◆ Legal Committee speakers favour new mechanisms for peaceful settlement of disputes.

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The Security Council held consultations this morning to discuss the situation in Haiti, where on Monday, 30 September, Haitian President Jean-Bertrand Aristide was overthrown by the military.

A United Nations Spokesman told correspondents at noon that the Council, during consultations, had decided to convene a formal meeting at 8 p.m. tonight to hear an address by President Aristide, to be followed by a statement by the Permanent Representative of Honduras, speaking on behalf of the Latin American and Caribbean Group as its Chairman.

The Spokesman said Honduras had requested the inscription on the General Assembly's agenda of a new item concerning the situation in Haiti and that a draft resolution was being prepared for adoption by the Assembly.

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For information media—not an official record

Following the events in Haiti on Monday, the Secretary-General expressed concern at the grave threat posed to democracy, which the Haitian people had just established through United Nations-supervised free and fair elections.

In a related development, the Director-General of the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO), Frederico Mayor, has appealed for the respect of democratic freedoms and a return to constitutional order in Haiti.

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Opening this morning's debate in the General Assembly, the President of the interim Government of Liberia, Amos Sawyer, expressed hope that the crisis in his country was now ending. "For the first time in our crisis", he said, "all sides seem convinced that we have now begun the final stretch in the journey to a lasting settlement". He expressed gratification to the member States of the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS) and its cease-fire monitoring group (ECOMOG), saying it was this Group that put an end to the carnage and destruction that was going on in Liberia.

He said Liberia needed peace, and reaffirmed the interim Government's commitment to the holding of free and fair general and presidential elections under international supervision.

He urgently appealed to all nations to offer substantial assistance to the countries presently engaged in the peace-keeping effort in Liberia.

In his statement to the Assembly, the Foreign Minister for External Relations of Cameroon, Jacques-Roger Booh-Booh, stressed the difficult economic situation that most developing countries have to face at the present time. It was unbearable, he said, that the poor countries continue to channel the little financial resources they have towards the rich countries, while public aid to development is decreasing; the prices of primary commodities are declining and the social and political costs of the structural adjustment programmes are increasingly higher.

Mr. Booh-Booh called on the community of industrialized nations to adopt measures which would enable the developing countries to overcome the economic crisis, such as the reduction of the debt and the formulation of strategies to fight underdevelopment and social decay.

In his statement, Minister for Foreign Affairs of Bulgaria Victor Vulkov said his country had been actively supporting the efforts of the Conference on Security and Cooperation in Europe (CSCE) and the European Economic Community (EEC) in seeking a peaceful settlement to the crisis in Yugoslavia. However, he said, the concrete results of these efforts to contribute to an adequate solution had not yet met the expectations.

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Mr. Vulkov said Bulgaria was in favour of seeking a solution to the conflict by reasonable dialogue, with strict observance of human rights, the interests of all republics and the legitimate expression of their will for self-determination and a free choice of a form of government.

In his statement to the General Assembly, the Foreign Minister for Foreign Affairs of Morocco, Abdellatif Filali, reiterated the great importance that his country attached to the "so-called question of Western Sahara". The social, religious and historical ties between Sahara and other provinces of Morocco, he said, had blended the entire Moroccan territory into "one melting pot". Mr. Filali also expressed support for the 1986 Plan approved in April by the Security Council, stressing that it could be implemented in successive stages. However, he said, the translation of its provisions into practical measures would require consultations. He finally expressed the hope that the cooperation and understanding prevailing between Morocco and the Secretary-General of the United Nations would contribute to the settlement to the question at the beginning of next year.

Amara Essy, Minister for Foreign Affairs of Côte d'Ivoire, explained that his Government, with the help of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR), had been trying to render assistance to about 320,000 Liberian refugees in Côte d'Ivoire while they waited to return to their homes. Their return, however, depended on the restoration of peace and security in Liberia, he said.

Mr. Essy also expressed concern over the deterioration of the economic situation of Africa; its external debt had been going up steadily, while the prices of its primary commodities stagnated, he said. He called for efforts to be made towards an effective transfer of technology enabling the developing countries to manufacture their primary products.

Speaking in the debate, the Permanent Representative of Guinea, Zainoul Abidine Sanoussi, said that the massive influx of almost half a million refugees from Liberia had placed a very serious economic, environmental and health burden on his country. He expressed the hope that Liberia would shortly overcome its internal difficulties in order to put an end to the suffering of its people and called on the international community to render long-term financial and economic assistance to the Liberian refugees temporarily settled in Guinea.

Mr. Sanoussi also drew attention to the economic difficulties of the developing countries which, he said, still suffer primarily from the decline of the prices of their primary commodities as well as from the huge debt burden.

Minister for External Relations of Mongolia, Tserenpiliin Gombosuren, told the Assembly that his country attached great importance to strengthening mutual understanding and trust in Asia, and had offered in the past some ideas towards this end. In particular, Mongolia had proposed to hold, on a regular

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basis, a dialogue between the countries of the northern part of Asia and the Pacific to exchange views on ways and means to find optimal solutions to the existing problems.

The Mongolian Minister said that in spite of the diverse mosaic of the Asian continent, with many ethnic, religious, cultural and other differences, the Asian countries had many things in common. He cited urgent problems of economic and social development, degradation of the environment and many others that required active joint efforts, he said.

In his statement to the General Assembly, the Minister for External Relations of Burundi, Cyprien Mbonimpa, said that the formation of a National Unity Government, and the undertaking of a vast operation of repatriation of refugees, reflected the will of his Government to build a just and democratic society in Burundi. A new constitution liberalizing the political life of Burundi should be submitted to referendum at the beginning of 1992, he said. He also pointed out that the proper conditions had been created for the voluntary return of the refugees and that, to date, more than 10,000 people had done so.

The Minister for Foreign Affairs of Mauritania, Hasni Ould Didi, said the critical economic situation of the developing countries in general, and of the African nations in particular, called for solutions to enable the African countries to generate domestic resources and to favour their economic recovery. If nothing is done, he said, the structural adjustment programmes being presently implemented in those countries will not have contributed to improving their economic and financial situation.

He also expressed the concern of his Government over the desertification process that is affecting Mauritania and welcomed the holding of the next year's United Nations Conference on Environment and Development in Brazil which, he said, should find timely and appropriate solutions to that problem.

Minister of Foreign Affairs and Foreign Trade of Jamaica, David Coore, told the Assembly that the major outstanding issue of concern for the Caribbean and Latin American region was the continuing "posture of confrontation" that existed between Cuba and the United States. He said there was no doubt that the people of the region would welcome some movement on the part of both countries that could eventually lead to the full reintegration of Cuba into the family of nations.

Mr. Coore also spoke about the debt crisis, now entering its second decade, which he said had created a debilitating condition for many countries in the Caribbean and Latin American region. He called on the international financial institutions to restructure and refinance debts owed by developing countries, and urged that they review the "relevance and efficacy of their traditional prescriptions" for the economies of these developing countries.

In his statement, the Minister of Transport and Communications of Malawi, D.S. Katopola, said his country welcomed the repeal in the middle of this year of the apartheid laws in South Africa, as well as the other measures taken by

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the authorities in that country to move definitively towards the establishment of a just and equitable social, political and economic order. However, he said, the real objective had not yet been achieved and much remained to be done before this is so. Mr. Katopola expressed the hope that collective leadership, pragmatism, patience and foresight would be exercised so that the realization of long-term national interests can be achieved.

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Action was needed to combat disease and ignorance in the developing world, as well as the problems of drug abuse, crime and an imbalanced distribution of wealth, according to the Chairman of the General Assembly's Third Committee (Social, Humanitarian and Cultural), Mohammad Hussain Al-Shaali of the United Arab Emirates. Mr. Al-Shaali was delivering his opening remarks to the Committee which began its work for the current session yesterday.

Also addressing the Committee, Antoine Blanca, Director-General for Development and International Economic Cooperation, stressed that the right to development was an integral component of fundamental human rights, adding that global security could only be assured when economic relations between States were balanced, equitable and just.

Rafeeuddin Ahmed, Under-Secretary-General for International Economic and Social Affairs, in his introductory remarks, said economic development was impossible without a firm social foundation. He said developed countries would help promote sustained growth in the developing world if they liberalized trade, reduced interest rates and increased the transfer of resources to developing countries.

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The trend towards a market economy being undertaken by an increasing number of countries should be a priority topic on the United Nations agenda, the Soviet Union told the Second Committee (Economic and Financial), as it continued its debate on the world economic situation.

The Soviet representative, Sergey V. Lavrov, went on to say that it would enable the Organization to reorient its programmes and support the reform process now that the "ideology-based development model" had been discarded.

In other statements, the representatives of Iran, Mexico and Djibouti called for increased international cooperation and an early, successful conclusion to the Uruguay Round of multilateral trade negotiations.

Speakers also called for a new North-South dialogue based not on ideological confrontation but on the need for agreement on global economic issues such as debt and the relationship between environment and development.

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Delegations at this morning's meeting of the Sixth Committee (Legal) have urged that the United Nations seek new mechanisms for the peaceful settlement of disputes between States. The Committee was continuing its debate on the Report of the Special Committee on the Charter of the United Nations and on the Strengthening of the Role of the Organization.

Speakers expressed support for a draft declaration on fact-finding by the United Nations and called for further consideration of a working paper on enhancing the cooperation between the United Nations and regional organizations presented by the Soviet Union, and for a proposed set of conciliation rules presented to the Sixth Committee at its last session by Guatemala.

Delegations took note of a request by the Secretary-General in his annual report that the General Assembly resort more frequently to advisory opinions of the International Court of Justice. They urged that the Assembly, in its current session, approve a handbook on the peaceful settlement of disputes between States. It was also stated during today's debate that there should be a clear balance between the prerogatives of the permanent members of the Security Council and the respect for the principle of sovereign equality between States.

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